

education—including 6.8 million workers with bachelor's degrees and 4.3 million workers with a postsecondary vocational certificate, some college credits, or an associate's degree—will fall short of the demand for workers with those credentials by 11 million. This mismatch will impede our economic growth and harm our international competitiveness. It also represents a huge lost opportunity for millions of hard-working Americans and their families. To maintain our position as the world's economic leader, we need to educate and train our workers to fill the skilled jobs of the knowledge-based economy. And the workforce development system needs to pivot from short-term crisis intervention to long-term human capital development. WIOA does that, and the substitute amendment the Senate has passed demonstrates that here in Congress, we can come together to work on legislation that will boost the economic recovery and help all Americans.

WIOA

Mr. SCOTT. Madam President, I am pleased the Senate voted this week to improve job training in the United States. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, WIOA, is the result of a commitment in both parties and both Chambers to modernize our workforce development system to ensure American competitiveness. The last time a Workforce Investment Act reauthorization was signed into law was in 1998, far too long ago, and the significant skills gap we face as a Nation is evidence that our fragmented system simply is not working.

Despite the billions of taxpayer dollars we invest annually on Federal job training programs, there are 4.5 million unfilled jobs and a staggering 10 million unemployed Americans. We need to bridge this gap, and WIOA helps get us there by reducing bureaucracy and providing American workers with a more flexible and effective workforce training system. Over the past year, I have heard from businesses, elected State and local leaders, and families back home about the critical need for reforms to our job training system, and I am glad to have had the chance to work on this bill and be a part of this process in the Senate.

This legislation incorporates many reforms contained in the SKILLS Act, which I introduced in the Senate earlier this year, including the elimination of 15 programs identified as duplicative or ineffective and countless Federal mandates on States and local boards. In addition, WIOA establishes common performance metrics and requires independent evaluations every 4 years of all workforce programs to ensure effectiveness and accountability to taxpayers. By reducing bureaucracy and enhancing flexibility, WIOA eliminates delays that hinder job seekers from immediately accessing job training services and reentering the workforce.

I appreciate my colleagues' work on this important issue and look forward to swift passage of WIOA in both Chambers.

JUNETEENTH REMEMBRANCE

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, last Friday was Juneteenth, which marks four of the most important days in our Nation's long and continuing march toward racial justice and civil rights in this country.

First, on June 19, 1862, President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation abolished slavery in all U.S. territories. Then 3 years later, a month after the end of our Civil War, Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, TX, to free the last of our Nation's slaves. Nearly a century later on June 19, 1963, with Jim Crow laws still a stain on the moral fabric of our country, President John F. Kennedy sent his Civil Rights Act of 1963 to Congress. And the following year, as the Nation mourned JFK's loss, President Johnson shepherded the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to final passage.

As we mark these days in our Nation's history, from the end of our darkest period to some of the most important pieces of civil rights legislation passed, we know we still have farther to go.

It is appropriate that we do so this year especially, that we mark June 19 and these five moments across our Nation's history, because as a result of the Supreme Court's decision last year, the Shelby County case, a key piece of President Johnson's Voting Rights Act of 1965 stands in bad need of repair and revision; and, in fact, the Voting Rights Act itself is at risk of becoming a dead letter in the future of voting in our country.

Two years ago I had the opportunity to join many of my colleagues in the House and the Senate, Republicans and Democrats, in returning to Selma to the site of Bloody Sunday, to the march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Many Members of Congress got a chance to hear again from Congressman LEWIS about the events of that day, that day that was etched into the consciousness of this country and mobilized millions to speak out to their representatives and Senators and move this Congress finally to enact legislation that would unlock the key to the ballot box across the country.

I was so proud earlier this year to join with Chairman LEAHY of the Senate Judiciary Committee and with Senator DICK DURBIN, Congressman LEWIS, icon of the Civil Rights movement, Congressman JOHN CONYERS, and Republican Congressman JIM SENSENBRENNER, to introduce a bill that would restore the core protections made possible in the original Voting Rights Act.

The bill we introduced doesn't look at discrimination through the lens of the past. It focuses on modern-day violations, not the things that happened 50 years ago. It takes up the challenge

laid down by the Supreme Court and comes up with a new formula and a new approach that makes voting rights and elections more transparent and has been carefully crafted to be both effective and to pass this Congress. It is a voting rights bill that is modern, to confront modern voting rights challenges.

As a country we have come a long way since 1965, but we are not where we need to be yet. As much as we don't want to admit it or confront it, racial discrimination in voting is not a relic of the past, but a tragic reality of today. Just yesterday the Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on what to do to address the loss of a key part of the Voting Rights Act that is known as preclearance.

In 2013 the Supreme Court struck down the heart of the Voting Rights Act, a bill that each and every Senate Republican voted for in 2006. Let me be clear about that. Again, in 2006 this body unanimously reauthorized the Voting Rights Act. Yet in 2013 the Supreme Court struck down an essential provision of that very act.

The Voting Rights Act and leadership to address the challenges of civil rights in this country have long been bipartisan in nature. My own family and friends who are Republicans are justifiably proud of their party's leadership role in addressing the darkest days and the biggest challenges in civil rights in the last century in this country. But today we are struggling in this body to find a single Republican cosponsor for this important and necessary bill. I ask my friends: Is this because there is nothing that remains to be done? Is that 2006 act, unanimously passed by this body, so obsolete that there is no legislative response necessary to Shelby?

I think a response is necessary. A month after the Supreme Court's decision, North Carolina passed a restrictive, a deeply restrictive, voting law that in addition to a strict photo ID requirement reduces early voting and forbids local jurisdictions flexibility in setting hours for early voting, among other restrictions. After the Shelby County decision, in Pasadena, TX, that city's voters adopted a plan to reduce the number of single-member districts from eight to six, adding two at-large representatives, a change nearly certain to reduce Latino representation on their city council. Hours after the decision, the State of Texas announced plans to implement its photo ID law that had long been blocked under section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. Again and again, shortly following the Shelby County decision, jurisdictions moved to implement discriminatory voting changes that had previously been blocked under section 5. Something needs to be done. I would suggest to my colleagues, if you don't like this proposal, please come forward with something you can support, with something that looks forward, not back; that has a formula that protects voting as the